

THREEPENCE NET

AN

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Hour's Literary Ramble

STARTING FROM

The Little Book Shop

AT THE SIGN OF



"O Rare Ben Jonson"

"The Ben Jonson Head"

4 NEWMAN'S ROW

LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, LONDON

1910

AN HOUR'S
LITERARY RAMBLE



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Literary Ramble
Starting From
The Little Book Shop
Called
"The Ben Jonson Head"



KEPT BY
SAMUEL HALES, 4 NEWMAN'S ROW
LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS
LONDON

TO
JAMES WELCH
(THE ACTOR)
AT WHOSE SUGGESTION THIS TINY PEBBLE
IS LAID UPON
THE GREAT CAIRN ACKNOWLEDGING
LONDON

9th JUNE, 1910

AN HOUR'S LITERARY RAMBLE.

The "Ben Jonson" Book Shop

THE tradition which associates "Ben Jonson" with LINCOLN'S INN is so secure that it has been thought fit to use his name for the little Book Shop in Newman's Row.

What name could more fitly be taken than that of the Man who worked on the Gateway, on the Wall and on the Chapel of Lincoln's Inn, with a trowel in his hand and a book in his pocket? He knew well "The Walks of Lincoln's Inn under the Elms," as he calls them in one of his own Plays. And there over the wall opposite, are the self-same "Walks," although elms are fewer, and poets fewer still to walk in the shade of them.

That "book in the pocket" of the workman makes one think of Ben as a likely customer, had our little Book Shop then been handy, in his dinner-hour.

But since Ben's body lies (or, to be correct, *stands*, for it was buried upright)

in Westminster Abbey, his Name and Works alone are ours. How characteristic of Ben the Workman it was to be the first English Author to put forth his Writings as his "Works"! He was jeered at for the word, but it made a lasting precedent.

Well, leaving "The Ben Jonson Head" let us turn to the left, and first peep round the corner into

Whetstone Park

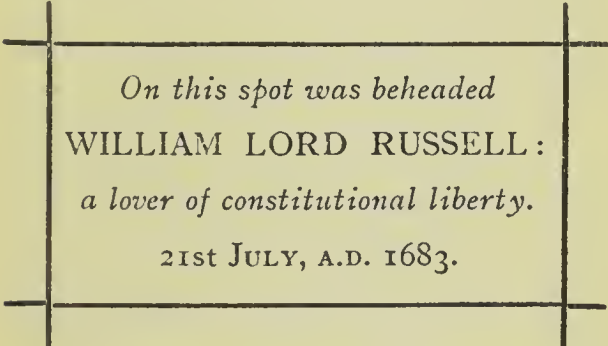
"Not a pleasant place," you say; yet at that corner, betwixt Holborn and the Fields of Lincoln's Inn, once stood "Spencer House," on an estate called "Spencer's Lond." To that house the Author of *The Fairy Queen* would come, for it was the ancestral home of his family. In 1618, when houses began to be built in Holborn, the mansion as such, lost favour, and it became a famous hostelry called "The Bull and Gate." There Fielding makes "Tom Jones" alight on his arrival in London. Milton too lived hard by in a house in Holborn. Later, when the London magistrates banished all "the light-o-loves" from the city, they passed outside the boundary at Holborn Bars, and made Whetstone Park their evil haunt.

Now having had our peep into a dim corner of the past, let us turn our faces southwards into

Lincoln's Inn Fields

Heckethorn, the Historian of Lincoln's

Inn has wittily remarked that as London is the topographical (and commercial) centre of the earth's land surface, so "Lincoln's Inn Fields" is London's topographical centre, and therefore "the very centre of all the land of the earth." Nor is that all to say of it, for let us go to the central oval of the Fields and read the engraved tablet on the centre of the floor.



On this spot was beheaded
WILLIAM LORD RUSSELL:
a lover of constitutional liberty.
21st JULY, A.D. 1683.

So in this *cor cordium* of the earth is engraved the word LIBERTY, even on the spot where the patriot sealed his devotion to it with his blood.

Passing under the arch we enter

Lincoln's Inn

On our left are the Gardens praised by Jonson, Pepys and Addison, before they were encroached upon by the present buildings. We are now in "New Square" (built 1683.) This was part of the Tilting Field of the Knights of St. John. Here in

a solicitor's office Charles Dickens was once a boy-clerk. On the walls of Nos. 12 and 13 vines are growing. A step or two forward and we enter "Old Square." There on the right stands the Old Hall of Lincoln's Inn (built 1506 on the site of an older one.) There Revels and Masques were held. To one of them King Charles the Second came in State, attended by his Brother James, Prince Rupert, and the young Duke of Monmouth. It was also used as the Court where Chancery suits were tried. Little Miss Flite in *Bleak House* was a suitor here.

On the left stands the Old Chapel of the Inn, built by Inigo Jones, 1623, on the site of an older one. In the crypt the Saintly Baxter was buried; also Prynne the lawyer, whose ears were clipped for "impertinent" criticism of courtly playgoers and stage manners. Between the pillars of the crypt the lawyers of old awaited clients and discussed cases. Here Pepys came to walk and talk and learn the last *on dit*.

Passing between the Chapel and Hall we stand facing the famous towered Gateway entrance from Chancery Lane. The oaken doors have swung here since 1564. This Gateway is one of the four oldest buildings of the kind in London. The arms on it are those of the Earl of Lincoln (whose "Inn," or town house with gardens, stood here in 1312), and of Sir Thomas Lovell, a generous benefactor.

To recite the names of all the famous men who have passed beneath this archway would be impossible. Take it for certain that Bacon, Shakespeare, Jonson, Pepys, Cromwell, Dickens, Thackeray and Tennyson did often enter here. To No. 24 Old Buildings, Oliver Cromwell would come often to confer with Secretary Thurloe. In a false ceiling there Thurloe secreted a mass of important letters and state papers, which by mere chance were brought to light in after years.

Passing through the Gateway we stand in

Chancery Lane

First glancing across to Cursitor Street, we are reminded that in Took's Court there, poor Sheridan fretted his last year of life, 1815, in a spunging-house under arrest for debt. In *Bleak House* it is called "Cook's Court."

Sauntering through Chancery Lane in a vacant and despairing hour the eye of young Poet Coleridge caught sight of a placard asking for "smart lads for the Light Dragoons," and, achieving one of life's little ironies, the Poet took the shilling and turned soldier. In this Lane the great Lord Strafford was born, and here, Tonson, the noted bookseller, had his first shop, near to Fleet Street. In Chichester Rents once stood "Symonds Inn," described in *Bleak House*. At the corner, now "The Three Tuns," was the "Sols Arms," where "Poor Joe's" evidence

was refused at the inquest. At No. 120 Izaak Walton kept a linen-draper's shop, 1627-1644, making good profit from the expensive style of dress which young gallants of the fashion then affected.

The large building on the left is

The Record Office

The store-house of our National Archives from the year 1100. Here in the Museum (free) may be seen the Domesday Book of William the Conqueror, and amongst other important records and letters—the Log Book of Nelson's "Victory." The Search Room is accessible to anyone observing the regulations. Here Dr. Wallace, the American Professor, recently brought to light those rich discoveries concerning Shakespeare.

The Record Office holds the most complete collection of National Archives in the world.

The Temple

Crossing Fleet Street we pass through Inner Temple Lane into the most beautiful of the Inns of Court—The Temple—so named from the Knights Templars who settled here 1184-1313. At the Reformation it became the property of the Crown, and was then granted by James I. to the Benchers for ever. The Temple is enclosed by walls and gates, and comprises the Inner Temple (East) and the Middle Temple (West.) The Outer Temple was never held

by the Lawyers. The Great Fire destroyed a part of the Inner Temple, but fortunately spared the Church. Notice the arms of the Inner Temple—a winged horse, with the motto, *Volat ad astra virtus*; and of the Middle Temple—the Lamb bearing the bar of innocence and the red cross—both badges reminiscent of the Knights Templars.

The Temple Church

But their most impressive memorial is the Temple Church, the sombre and venerable repository of the knights of the age of chivalry. The Round Church, of transition Norman work, was built in 1185. The Choir was finished in 1240 in Early English Style. As opportunity serves notice the fine Norman Doorway, the stately effigies, the penitential cell (in one case a death cell) and the Triforium. The "Round" was used by the Lawyers of old to receive clients, each one occupying his own particular post. Like the Crypt of Lincoln's Inn the place became a promenade for gossip and *rendezvous*. Here lie buried "The Learned Selden," Howell the Letter-writer, ~~Gibbon the Historian~~ and Oliver Goldsmith, whose tomb is in the churchyard north of the Choir.

Famous Residents

Dr. Johnson lodged at No. 1 Inner Temple Lane (now rebuilt as Johnson's

Buildings) and there Madame De Boufflers came to visit him.

Charles Lamb, life-long lover and eulogist of the old place, was born in Crown Office Row, where he lived seven years. In later life he occupied No. 16 Mitre Court Buildings, and later still No. 4 Inner Temple Lane. Burke, the statesman, lodged over a book shop inside the gateway of Inner Temple Lane. Cowper the poet, while living in the Inner Temple, had the first great sorrow of his life in being forbidden to marry his cousin. In Pump Court Fielding lodged, and there "Martin Chuzzlewit" revealed himself to "Tom Pinch."

At No. 2 Brick Court in the second floor rooms on the right Oliver Goldsmith spent the happiest years of his life, and there he died on April 4th, 1774. On the day of his funeral the stairway to his room was crowded with loving mourners of all sorts and conditions—mostly women to whom his generous nature had been their sunshine. The great and serious lawyer Blackstone occupied the rooms beneath Goldsmith's, and often found his studies interrupted by the revelry overhead. Thackeray in a later time lived in Goldsmith's rooms, and he makes "Pendennis" and "Warrington residents in Lamb Court.

The pleasantest part of the Middle Temple is Fountain Court. At the fountain here "Ruth Pinch" used to meet

her brother, and sometimes "John Westlock," "coming briskly up, with the best little laugh upon her face that ever played in opposition to the fountain, and beat it all to nothing."

The Old Hall

In this court stands Middle Temple Hall, hard by the Temple Gardens. An Elizabethan building dating from 1572. It has a magnificent room with fine windows above, richly staining the light with colour against the foil of the old oak panelling below. Revels were held here four times a year with lavish splendour. The most memorable event in its history was the production of the *Twelfth Night* in 1601-2, most likely under Shakespeare's personal direction. Shakespeare in Henry VI., Part 1, Act 2, makes Suffolk say :

"Within the Temple Hall we were too loud,
The garden here is more convenient."

So into the Temple Gardens the Lancastrian and Yorkist partisans go to pluck "the red rose and the white" for their respective badges in the bloody war which that day's quarrel broached.

From the Middle Temple westwards as far as Somerset House the streets are built on the sites of the old mansions and gardens of the Earls of Essex and Arundel. In Devereux Court stood the famous Grecian Coffee House frequented by Addison.

Essex Street, Strand.

In Essex Street stood the mansion of the Earl of Essex, favourite of Queen Elizabeth, (the Unitarian Hall is built on part of the site) with gardens down to the Thames. From this house he and his fellow-conspirators marched forth to seize the person of the Queen. They were driven back and besieged, and the unfortunate Essex was beheaded. At the "Essex Head" Tavern (now No. 40) Dr. Johnson founded a Club called "Sam's." And at the Robin Hood Tavern Edmund Burke made his first speech in a debating club. In this street Lady Primrose received as guests "Flora MacDonald" and "Bonnie Prince Charlie."

In Arundel House John Evelyn persuaded the Earl of Arundel to present his library to the Royal Society and his collection of inscribed marbles to Oxford University. In this house occurred that dramatic deathbed scene of the Old Countess of Nottingham, who, under pressure of her husband, had kept back the ring which would have saved the Earl of Essex from the scaffold. When dying she implored forgiveness, but Queen Elizabeth's stern answer was, "God may forgive you, but I never can."

In Norfolk Street, Peter the Great lodged in 1698. So also did William Penn the Quaker, Coleridge, Tennyson and Miss Mitford. Penn being then in difficulties

lodged at the S.W. corner house for easy escape by boat. He had a peeping hole made so as to detect unwelcome visitors.

In Howard Street lived Mrs. Bracegirdle—the Diana of the Stage—and in this street Mountfort the actor was murdered (1692) by Lord Mohun in rivalry for that lady. In this street Dickens locates “Mrs. Lirriper’s Lodgings.” In Surrey Street lived Congreve the dramatist when Voltaire on a visit rebuked his host severely, saying:—“Had you been so unfortunate as to have been a mere gentleman I should not have taken the trouble of coming to see you.”

The Roman Bath

In Strand Lane is an old Roman Bath into which an unceasing supply of cold crystal water flows from the Holy well of St. Clement (open 11 to 12 Saturday only), a London relic seldom visited but of surpassing interest. Near it is another bath said to have been built by the Earl of Essex and accessible from his house.

Somerset House

Somerset House (old building) was erected in 1552 by the Protector Somerset, who lost his head before the house was roofed. It was used as a Royal Residence by Queens Henrietta Maria and Catherine of Braganza. A Masque presented here Christmas 1632 for Queen Henrietta Maria induced the daring Prynne to write his

Histrionastix for which he lost his ears. The bodies of King James I., his Queen Anne, Oliver Cromwell and General Monk were laid in state here. The place was afterwards used as Hampton Court now is—as a retirement residence for Courtiers and Nobility. The Society of Antiquaries and the Royal Academy once held their meetings here. The Admiralty Office was kept here in Nelson's time. Nelson was observed invariably to walk from the Strand to the Office door in a bee-line across the cobble-stones in the court-yard, never round the side walk. The Poet Crabbe wrote lines here “in the solitude of Somerset House as quiet as the sands of Arabia.” It is now used for Government Offices. Wills are stored here. Shakespeare, Newton and Dr. Johnson's wills and those of all the great Englishmen may be inspected. Here Herbert Spencer and George Eliot are said to have held long conversations while pacing up and down the Terrace together.

The Strand

Returning along the Strand we notice the graceful steeple of St. Mary's le Strand Church. On its site at the foot of Drury Lane stood the Old Maypole. The Restoration Maypole set up in 1661 was 134 feet in height and remained there 56 years. With drums and trumpets, shouts and acclamations, with tabor and pipe and Morris dance the ceremony was done, and

"little children did much rejoice and ancient people did clap their hands," saying, "golden days begin to appear."

Here on May Day, 1667, the observant Pepys "did meet many milkmaids with their garlands upon their pails, dancing with a fiddler before them ; and saw pretty Nelly (Gwynne) standing at her lodgings door in Drury Lane in her smock sleeves and bodice, looking upon one ; she seemed a mighty pretty creature."

Holywell Street, the book-hunter's resort, Wych Street, Drury Court and the rookeries adjoining have all been swept away to make the new crescent road called Aldwych, one horn of which enters the Strand opposite the Gladstone Statue and St. Clements Danes Church.

Dr. Johnson attended this Church, and on his pew, No. 18 North Gallery, a brass plate memorial is fixed. The name is believed to originate in the district having been reserved for a Danish remnant. Here Mary Davies, the Pimlico Heiress, was married to Sir Thomas Grosvenor, and here "Joe Miller" of jesting fame is buried.

Clement's Inn

Clement's Inn, on the west side of the Law Courts, has been deprived of its older and picturesque portions by the new Aldwych, but Shakespeare has given it a local habitation for all time in the second part of *King Henry IV*. Justice Shallow "was once of Clement's Inn." Falstaff says

"I do remember him at Clement's Inn, like a man made after supper of a cheese-paring." The Chimes which Falstaff heard at midnight in Clement's Inn may still be heard. "Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St. Clemmon's."

The Law Courts

The Royal Courts of Justice, commonly called the Law Courts, built 1882, occupy seven acres. Part of its northern site was used as a tilting field by the Knights Templars. Butcher's Row and Shire Lane were cleared off its southern portion.

At the "Cat and Fiddle" in Shire Lane was the famous Kit Kat Club of Protestant politicians. There one day the little Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, eight years old, was caressed and toasted and had the happiest day of her life. The Butchers of Butchers Row were a jolly set of men, for Pepys tells us that "at the Maypole in the Strand they rang a peal with their knives, when they were going to sacrifice their rump." One hopes that some joy may still be found in these stern Courts when sacrifices are made to justice.

Temple Bar

Temple Bar was always a barrier to guard the "Liberties" of the City. Even the entrance of the Sovereign to the City is always made with a pause of ceremony here. The Griffin stands to-day where Wren in 1670 erected the Old Temple Bar

Archway. High up aloft on spikes the heads and limbs of traitors were fixed on Temple Bar as a terror to evil-doers. In 1745 the heads of Rebels could be seen from Leicester Square, yet showmen, so Horace Walpole says, used to invite the gaping crowd beneath the archway at a half-penny a spy-glass peep to get a good view of the grisly relics.

The Devil Tavern

There on the right at No. 1 Fleet Street stand's Child's, the oldest banking house in England—the "Tellson's Bank" of the *Tale of Two Cities*. On its site stood the famous "Devil Tavern," the favourite resort of Ben Jonson and his devoted admirer Shadwell. The signboard represented St. Dunstan holding the Devil's Nose with a pair of tongs according to legend. Here Ben founded and became first president of the Club which met in a room called "The Apollo." A bust of Apollo and a board inscribed "welcome to the Oracle of Apollo" are said to be still preserved in the Bank. In that room the Poets Laureate, and Ben was one of them, recited their Birthday Odes.

Ben has confided to us that he "drank bad wine at the Devil" and that "the first speech in my *Catiline* spoken to Scylla's Ghost was writ after I had parted with my friends at the Devil Tavern; I had drunk well that night, and had brave notions."

Killigrew later laid one of the scenes in

"The Parson's Wedding" here. Dean Swift, on the 12th October, 1710, dined here with Addison and Garth. Pope has immortalised the place in verse. Goldsmith came here to play at cards, and one evening in 1751 Dr. Johnson had a merry party here, in the course of which "his face shone with meridian splendour," to celebrate the publication of Mrs. Charlotte Lennox's first novel—*The Life of Harriet Stuart*.

On the site of No. 8, now an optician's, stood Richard's or Dick's Coffee House. Hither Steele brought his band of Twaddlers (see Tatler) and here it was that poet Cowper while at breakfast became terribly upset about a letter in the newspaper and rushed out to commit suicide. (see Southey's Cowper.)

At No. 15, now "The Bodega," opposite Chancery Lane stood the "Rainbow Tavern" at first known as Nando's Coffee House. James Farr who kept it was in 1657 summoned "for making and selling a sort of liquor called coffee." It was the first home in 1682 of the Phoenix Fire Office.

Throw a glance across the road, for there, two doors west of Chancery Lane, dear old Izaak Walton once kept a linen draper's shop.

Prince Henry's House

No. 17. This is said to be the oldest house in London and is now called what it actually was—Prince Henry's House. The

London County Council keeps it open, free, and its interesting history may be had in Prince Henry's Room for 2d. Notice the fine front, fine ceiling, and oak panelling on west of room, all old.

At No. 22 is "The Cock Tavern" which contains a Chimney-piece and the Chanticleer brought from the old Cock Tavern which stood on the other side near Temple Bar. To that haunt came Pepys, Dr. Johnson, Thackeray and Tennyson. (see Tennyson's poem *Will Waterproof*: "Oh, plump head waiter at the Cock.")

At No. 32 is Falcon Court, where Wynkin de Worde, the old printer, had his office with "The Falcon" for his sign. Fleet Street ever since Caxton's time has been a great printing centre.

The Mitre Tavern

At No. 39, now Messrs. Hoare's Bank, stood the favourite haunt of Dr. Samuel Johnson—"The Mitre Tavern." Here he drank his bottle of port and kept late hours. Here Goldsmith often supped with Johnson, Boswell, and Garrick. Well might "Bozzy" write "here I had a pleasing elevation of mind beyond what I had ever experienced."

On March 7th, 1733, the windows of the Tavern were filled with faces watching the hanging of Sarah Malcolm (Hogarth has pictured her) across the Road at the end of Fetter Lane, for a three-fold murder done in Tanfield Court.

St. Dunstan's Church

Crossing to the other side of Fleet Street we see the Church of St. Dunstan's-in-the-West (built 1831.) The old churchyard facing Fleet Street was built in with stationers shops. There Smethwick published the 1609 edition of *Romeo and Juliet* and the 1611 edition of *Hamlet*. There Marriott published in 1653 Walton's *The Complete Angler*. Poet Donne was vicar here, and here Poets Davies and Campion were buried.

Notice the statue of Queen Elizabeth over the doorway. It is said to be the only known relic of any of the City gates and stood originally on the west front of Lud-Gate while the great fire destroyed everything around.

Clifford's Inn

Let us not delay to visit a fascinating old-world place, for the Sword of Damocles hangs over it with imminent doom.

This, the passage by the church, is the spot to which "Mr. Rokesmith" withdrew from the noise of Fleet Street, with "Mr. Boffin," to offer that gentleman his secretarial services.

In the Old Hall of this Inn, Sir Matthew Hale with seventeen other judges sat to adjust contending claims after the great fire. Robert Pultock, author of *Peter Wilkins*, in which winged women fly about, lived here. So did the talented

writer of another phantasy—Samuel Butler—author of *Erewhon* (*Nowhere.*) Here too lived gentle George Dyer, beloved and appraised friend of Charles Lamb.

Notice, indeed you cannot fail to see the turf and trees, and feel the pensive air of melancholy of this ancient Inn of Chancery ere it vanish for ever! Alas! that ever it should.

Fetter Lane

Passing out to the right we enter Fetter Lane, once the home of Hobbes the philosopher, Bagford the antiquary, Praise-God-Bare-bones, Richard Baxter and John Dryden. Ben Jonson knew it well, for in *Every man out of his humour* he writes—“And then forty shillings more I can borrow upon my gown in Fetter Lane.” The “Apaches” of the old days knew it too, for Stow says that ‘fewters’ or idle persons did there resort, and at both ends of it the gallows-tree was often planted. The notorious Mrs. Brownrigg did her apprentices to death in a house abutting on Fleur-de-Lys Court. In that Court stood the home of the Royal Society, replaced by the Scottish Corporation House. A building still called Newton Hall was used for some years by the Positivists under Mr. Frederick Harrison. There Coleridge gave his last lectures in 1818. At No. 32 is the old Moravian Chapel of the United Brethren. Here Count Zinzendorf, Wesley, and Whitefield preached.

At No. 38 is Nevill's Court containing Moravian House, once the Town House of the Nevilles, the famous Earls of Warwick. Charles Latrobe, the first Governor of Melbourne, once resided there. Here in the heart of London are other quaint old houses (that escaped the great fire) with little gardens in front. Mr. Keir Hardie, with artistic taste, has chosen No. 14 for his London House.

In a recess in the N.W. corner of the Lane stood Barnard's Inn, but now, alas, no longer stands there. The Mercer's School dominates the site, but happily, the tiny old hall, beloved of artists, still stands.

The Swan Distillery which stood here (rebuilt) was looted in the Gordon Riots of 1780 and "the liquor ran down into the streets where men and women made themselves mad."—*Barnaby Rudge*.

Now we enter

Holborn

(Old Bourne or Burn, a brook that fed the River Fleet) the old road from Newgate and the Tower to the gallows at St. Giles and Tyburn. "The Heavy Hill" denoting the ascent cancelled by the Holborn Viaduct, was an old phrase of double meaning—the hard pull it gave to everybody walking up it, and the still harder pull it gave to the malefactor riding in the cart on his last journey to the gallows.

Tom Clinch was an exception according to Dean Swift's verse:—

“As clever Tom Clinch while the rabble was
bawling,

Rode stately along Holborn to die in his calling,
He stopt at the George for a bottle of sack,
And promised to pay for it when he came back.”

Along this road from Aldgate to Tyburn, Titus Oates and Dangerfield received their cruel whippings at the cart's tail.

We have time only to glance away to the right, where stands St. Andrew's Church, unhurt of the great fire and teeming with interest. A few yards further on at “The Sign of the Star” in Snow Hill “John Bunyan” crossed the dark river.

Yonder across the road at No. 123 stands the “Old Bell Inn,” famous through two centuries as a great coaching and carrier's inn. Next door, eastwards, formerly stood The Black Bull, where “Lewsome” fell ill and received the attentions of “Sairey Gamp” and “Betsy Prig” whenever those ladies felt “disposed.”

Turning westward we notice on the right the red brick building of the Prudential Society, which covers the site of Furnival's Inn, demolished 1898. Sir Thomas More was a reader there, and there Dickens sprang into fame with his *Sketches by Boz*.

Brooke Street

In Brooke Street, west side of the Prudential Buildings, about 70 paces up from Holborn on the right stood the house, where, in a garret, the young Bristol poet,

Chatterton, ended his unhappy life with poison, and further along on the left side of Brooke Street is Fox Court where Richard Savage, another poet, began a miserable life, years afterwards to be terminated in Bristol.

At the end of Brooke Street is St. Alban's Church, noted for its Ritual. Brooke Market, near it, is a desolate but quaint old Square.

Returning, we come to Holborn Bars, marked by two obelisks on the footways, which, like Temple Bar, marked the limit of the City's Jurisdiction westward.

Staple Inn

And now we are at "The fayrest Inn of Chauncery," Staple Inn. This is certainly an incomparable relic of old-world London, and thanks to the Prudential Insurance Company, who purchased the place in 1884, will remain an eloquent memorial for coming ages to delight in its perfect beauty.

It was originally the Inn or Hostell of the Merchants of the Staple. "Staples" were places specially appointed for the export trade only, of wool, hides and wool-fells. In London they were near the City gates. This one became an Inn of Chancery certainly prior to 1415.

Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote a charming description of the Court concluding thus:—"In all the hundreds of years since London was built it has not been able to sweep its roaring tide over that little island of

quiet." Dickens, too, was enamoured of the spot, for he makes it the summer promenade of "Mr. Snagsby" (*Bleak House*). "Mr. Grewgious," too, (*Edwin Drood*), has chambers in No. 10; and "Neville Landless" and "Mr. Tartar" lived here also.

But by far the most precious thing to remember is that in a room here Dr. Johnson in 1759 wrote *Rasselas* in seven evenings to pay the expenses of his mother's funeral.

With a hearty vote of thanks for the public spirit of "The Prudential" we enter the roaring tide of "High Holborn." "Holborn" ends at the Bars. On the left are "Southampton Buildings," once the site of Southampton House, whence the widowed Lady Russell dated some of her sweet *in memoriam* letters. Here Charles Lamb came to live in 1809, and here at a lodging in No. 7, Hazlitt fell in love with Sarah Walker, his landlord's daughter, an experience which he has given with such minute and pathetic interest in his *Liber Amoris*.

In the centre of the wide roadway betwixt Gray's Inn Road and Staple Inn years ago stood an island of shops and houses called Middle Row.

Gray's Inn Road

Gray's Inn Road, formerly Gray's Inn Lane, we can but glance at, yet not fail to remember that along it "Tom Jones" entered London on his way to "The Bull

and Gate" in Holborn; that at a shop there, Osborne, in 1748, published *Roderick Randon*; Poet Shirley did his early work here, and Aubrey, the antiquary, mused and wrote of bygone England there. But most of all we remember that in this Lane John Hampden and Pym held great counsel together concerning wise procedure in the "Ship-money" affair.

At. No. 22 High Holborn is the Gateway to

Gray's Inn

with its spacious quadrangles and stately gardens. In rooms over the archway "David Copperfield and Dora" had their happy time together, but when Dickens knew it no stucco-plaster had spoiled the old brick front. At this gate the alms of the Society were given away, and here, during the Gordon Riots, Sir Samuel Romilly stood sentinel all through that anxious night.

Passing through, we come to South Square, in sight of the Old Hall of 1560, in which Shakespeare is belived to have played in *The Comedy of Errors*. The oak tables of the hall are said to have been given by Queen Elizabeth, who certainly showed marked honour to this Inn. Her memory is invariably toasted at their feasts.

There on the right is the tiny Chapel of the Inn which is mainly Lord Grey's Chantry of 1315. The Curfew Bell is

rung every night at nine o'clock. It has been so rung for the last 300 years.

Many distinguished men were students at Gray's Inn, notably—Thomas Cromwell, Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Burghley, Sir Thomas Gresham, Sir Philip Sydney, Sir Francis Bacon, Poets Shirley and Gascoigne, William Camden, Lord Chief Justice Holt, Richard Sibbs, Robert Southey, Lord Macaulay.

Famous residents here were Chapman (Dramatist), Cleveland (Poet), Butler, (Satirist), Ned Ward (of *London Spy* fame), Dr. Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith. At No. 6 Gray's Inn Square is a tablet commemorating Sir William Romilly's residence.

Verulam Buildings (E. side) are named after Bacon, Lord Verulam, who lived in rooms on the west side of Gray's Inn Square (rebuilt.) His memory pervades Gray's Inn. The famous essays were dated "from my chamber at Graies Inn this 30th day of January, 1597." In the Essay on Gardens Bacon pleads for "a mount of some pretty height, leaving the wall of the enclosure breast high to look abroad into the fields," and sure enough, at the northern limit of the gardens there is "Lord Bacon's Mount." In 1597-8 Sir Francis supervised the laying out of the gardens and the planting of the trees. The old Catalpa Tree at the N.W. corner is said to have been planted with his own hand.

Howell in 1621 called Gray's Inn Gardens

"the pleasantest place about London." In 1662 they had become a fashionable promenade, for when Mrs. Pepys had a mind for "new clothes" that May-time it was here that the observant Samuel brought her after church to watch "the fashions of the ladies." "Sir Roger de Coverley" came here to take the air, for beyond the Gardens it was then open country to Hampstead and Highgate. An old verse runs :—

Gray's Inn for walks,
Lincoln's Inn for wall,
The Inner Temple for a garden,
And the Middle for a Hall.

At No. 1 in Raymond's Buildings on the second floor front Dickens worked as a lawyer's clerk.

We leave now the Inns of Court which Ben Jonson eloquently called "the noblest nurseries of humanity and liberty in the Kingdom" and pass into Theobalds Road. At No. 22 is a tablet indicating the house in which Lord Beaconsfield was born. On the right is John Street leading to Doughty Street, which every Dickens lover should visit, for it is the only house in which the great London artist lived still unchanged. In that house he finished *Pickwick* and wrote *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby* when Victoria was yet a Girl-Queen. There his girls May and Kate were born, and there he sealed for life his friendship with John Forster, whose soul was content

to be a western window reflecting ascendant genius.

Returning down Bedford Row which in 1734 was one of the noblest streets in London with open fields in view northwards, we note 14 where the great and sardonic surgeon Abernethy died.

Hand Court

Next we pass into Hand Court. Here stands an imposing building "The City of New York Baronial Hall," but it is the old-fashioned building "The Feathers Tavern" (which years ago stood there) that we would fain believe we see, for that was an evening haunt of Charles Lamb.

High Holborn

Passing down to High Holborn we are opposite 285 where stood the "Old George and Blue Boar" Inn in which Cromwell and Ireton, with shrewd initiative, intercepted Charles I. letter to the Queen sealing Cromwell's fate. It was secreted in a saddle skirt. A spy of Cromwell's had given him timely notice.

Sheridan's Refuge

Here at 63, the corner of Featherstone Buildings, stood an oilshop kept by Charles Lamb's god-father. One evening when Charles's father and mother were playing at cards in the little room behind the shop, a gentleman abruptly entered the room, smiling humorously, with a lady

upon his arm. The lady was the beautiful Maria Linley, and he was the gallant Sheridan, who had induced her to elope from the boarding school at Bath to become his bride, and had brought her here for refuge.

On the opposite side of High Holborn, on or near the site of the Inns of Court Hotel, Milton once resided with his first wife, Mary Powell. In that home her father died, and there a deputation from the Government came to request Milton to take up the duties of Foreign Secretary to Cromwell.

In Red Lion Street stands the modern successor of the old "Red Lion," once the largest and best frequented inn in Holborn. To that inn the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw were brought from Westminster Abbey, and next day dragged on hurdles to Tyburn desecration.

We pass into Red Lion Square. At No. 17, Rossetti, William Morris and Burne-Jones once lodged. Jonas Hanway, a famous traveller, who is better remembered as the brave man who first sported an umbrella, died here. Milton had a house overlooking this square after receiving the King's pardon. When Charles II. heard of the sham funeral which the poet's friends had given him to preserve his life, the King laughed heartily at the trick.

Next we come to Southampton Row where poets Gray and Proctor ("Barry

Cornwall") once lodged, and where James Spedding was visited by Tennyson and Hallam. Crossing we enter on the estate of the Duke of Bedford. Here is Bloomsbury Square, where "Dick" Steele could say that "he had the prettiest house, to receive the prettiest woman, his own sweet Prue, for three years." At No. 5 Lord Beaconsfield lived with his father, Isaac D'Israeli, who wrote here "The Curiosities of Literature." (see Tablet.) At the north end of the east side stood the house (see Tablet) of Lord Mansfield, which was burnt down in the Gordon Riots. (*Barnaby Rudge*.) On the north side, opposite the statue of the great statesman, Charles James Fox, once stood the Southampton House, built 1664, the home of William Lord Russell.

Leaving the British Museum alone to-day, and returning down Southampton Street, where Colley Cibber was born, we cross High Holborn towards the new

Kingsway

This fine avenue to the Strand has eaten up half a dozen old streets.

Let us stand for one moment at the corner, for there, 227 years ago, the huge procession paused that Lord Russell might take one last tearful look at his home in Bloomsbury Square (no houses then obstructed vision) before passing to the headman's block in the Fields of Lincoln's Inn, a few hundred yards ahead. Move

gently forward past the Holborn Restaurant and still imagine that you are in The Little Queen Street of the past, for on that vacant site where a church has been and again will be erected, once stood the home of the Lamb family. There Mary Lamb, in a sudden frenzy, slew her mother, and there and then began the life-long devotion of her brother Charles. Thrice consecrate be that spot!

Passing down Kingsway we come to Sardinia Street, or what is left of it, for when Benjamin Franklin printer, lived in it, his lodging would be in the centre of the present Kingsway, opposite the Chapel of the Sardinian Ambassador. Built in 1648, (demolished 1909), the Chapel was the oldest continuous Roman Catholic foundation in London. The Gordon Rioters began their scenes of violence by an attack upon it. Clever Miss Burney, the novelist, was married there.

The Old Curiosity Shop

Passing into Portsmouth Street we enter into a district once famous for squalor and crime, but Kingsway and Aldwych have let daylight in. Over at the corner stands the "Old Curiosity Shop," the reputed home of "Little Nell." At the corner across stands George IV. Tavern on the site of "The Magpie and Stump" of the *Pickwick Papers*. Here Mr. Pickwick was entertained for an hour listening to Jack Bamber's legends of "those curious

old nooks"—the Inns of London. Joe Miller, the great jest maker, was a frequent visitor. His seat is still shown in the bar. Opposite once stood "The Horse and Groom," where Mr. Samuel Weller got into difficulties. Somewhere near stood "The Black Jack Tavern," whence Jack Shepherd escaped by jumping from the first floor window. The Honourable Society of Jackers used to hold "confab" here. Kemble and Hooke were members. Here was the last place in London where the stocks were set up (till 1820, having been brought from St. Clement Danes) opposite the site of King's College Hospital (built 1839).

The Duke's Theatre

Where the College of Surgeons now is, once stood a tennis court, which, in 1662, gave place to the Duke's Theatre, fronting Portugal Street and backing on the fields. The witty, wicked Earl of Rochester had his house next door. On the stage of this theatre scenery, pantomimes and oratorios are said to have been first introduced in London. Here the famous "Beggars Opera" was produced which "made Gay rich and Rich gay"—and the heroine "Polly Peacham" (Miss Lavina Fenton), Duchess of Bolton. The memorable names of Davenant, Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Bracegirdle, Congreve, Gay, Rich, Quin, and above all, Betterton, are closely associated with one or other of the three successive theatres on

this ground. Our friend, the unfailing Pepys, will introduce you to the show here when the Second Charles was King.

At the corner of Portugal and Serle Streets stood Serle's Coffee House where Addison went to study the humours of the young barristers.

Lincoln's Inn Fields

And now re-entering the Fields we pass the Royal College of Surgeons and come to the west side, where the fine architectural work of Inigo Jones may still be seen. Here is the archway entrance to the old Sardinian Chapel, with fleur-de-lys on the walls above.

Houses 57 and 58, the fine work of Inigo Jones, in recent danger of demolition, are now assured, thanks to the County Council. 58 was the home of John Forster, friend and biographer of Charles Dickens. In the front room on the first floor, December 2nd, 1844, Dickens read his new Christmas story *The Chimes* to a party of friends: Forster, Maclise, Jerrold, Carlyle, Blanchard, Fox, Stanfield, Harness and Dyce. In this house "Mr. Tulkinghorn" lived, and here the murder happened (*Bleak House*.) Tennyson once dined here with Count D'Orsay.

Nos. 59 and 60, designed by Inigo Jones, 1640, are known as Ancaster House (once called Lindsey House.) The Earl of Lindsey was killed in the Battle of Edgehill, 1642.

No. 60 was the home of James Spedding, the biographer of Bacon. Tennyson was a frequent visitor here. Once Moxon and Leigh Hunt remained till 4-30 in the morning while the poet read to them. Tennyson wrote most of *The Princess* here.

No. 66 is Newcastle House, formerly "Powis" House, built 1686 by the Marquis of Powis. Through his devotion to the Jacobite cause the house was seized for the Crown. Lord Chancellor Somers lived here. In a room on the right of the entrance Paterson is said to have first formulated his great scheme organising "The Bank of England."

In a house, probably on this side, Nell Gwynn lodged in 1670, when her son (afterwards Duke of St. Albans) was born.

In Gate Street stands the "Ship Tavern," dating from 1580, which is said to have been used as a hiding-place for persecuted priests, and later, as a meeting place of the Freemasons.

Soane House

No. 13 on the North Side of the Square is "The Soane House" (open free) crammed with many valuable treasures left as arranged by Sir John Soane in 1837. Notice the Hogarths and Turners, the Tasso Mss., the first four Shakespeare Folios, the sarcophagus and the medals.

And now a concluding word about "The Fields," the largest and probably the oldest square in London. In 1894 the Benchers of

Lincoln's Inn gave up their private rights to the Fields to the County Council for public use. Prior to 1740 the Fields were an open space without a single tree or shrub. Poet Gay in his *Trivia* warns citizens to shun the place as a dangerous haunt of thieves and bullies. Lord Macaulay describes it as being in 1685 "an open space where the rabble congregated every evening to hear mountebanks harangue, to see bears dance and to set dogs at oxen." Rubbish was shot in every part of the area. Horses were exercised there, and beggars were noisy and importunate. A Lincoln's Inn "Mumper" was a proverb. When Sir Joseph Jekyll, Master of the Rolls, was knocked down and nearly killed in the middle of the square, then came reform with palisades and garden. On May 13th, 1692, a duel was fought in the Fields between the Earls of Clare and Thanet. Each had married a daughter of the Duke of Newcastle, and the quarrel arose because the Duke had left all his property to the favoured Clare.

Here in 1676, Sadler, the notorious thief, and his companions, marched across the Fields carrying in mock state the Royal Mace and Purse just stolen from the bedroom of Lord Chancellor Finch in Great Queen Street, for which the bravo was marched to Tyburn.

Here in September, 1586, the Babington conspirators, 14 in all, were beheaded for

plotting against the life of Queen Elizabeth.

Famous residents around the Fields were the Earls of Bristol and Sandwich (Charles II.,) Sir Richard and Lady Fanshawe, Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, Lord Kenyon, Erskine, and Spencer Perceval. In proof of the rural nature of these old fields we have still in use the names of the Great and Little Turnstiles, which once let the pedestrians pass through whilst they checked the straying of the cattle.

The Great Turnstile

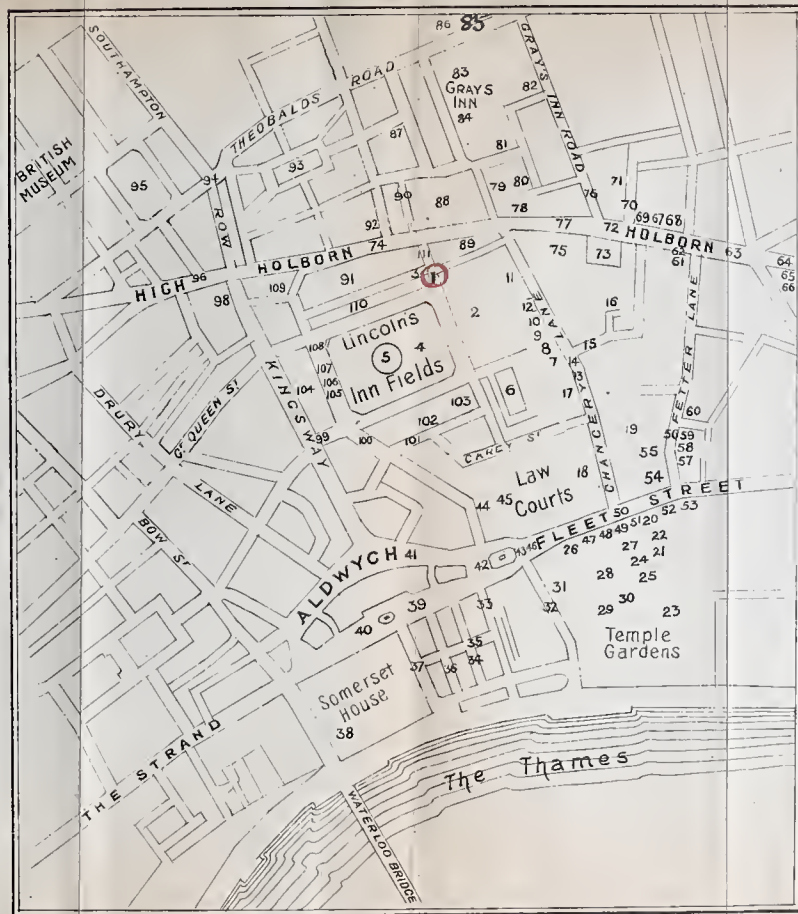
The Great Turnstile was built as a Change for the sale of Welsh flannels, but both Turnstiles became the home of publishers and booksellers. Bagford the Antiquary once kept a bookshop there, and Luke Hansard, the House of Commons Printer, worked as a compositor there in the office of Mr. Hughes, who first held the appointment. The corner house (now Hope Brothers) was a tavern of ill repute as far back as 1547. In No. 17 (built 1660, demolished 1886) once lived Penderell, who assisted Charles II. to escape to the continent.

We are now back again at "The Ben Jonson Head" and our ramble is ended, unless we go a few steps further for refreshment at The Inns of Court Hotel.

KEY TO THE MAP.

- 1 The "Ben Jonson" Book Shop
- 2 Lincoln's Inn Gardens, Library and Hall
- 3 Whetstone Park
- 4 Lincoln's Inn Fields
- 5 "Russell" Tablet
- 6 New Square 7 Old Buildings
- 8 Old Hall of Lincoln's Inn
- 9 Old Chapel of Lincoln's Inn
- 10 Old Square 11 Stone Buildings
- 12 Gateway of Lincoln's Inn
- 13 Thurloe's Rooms
- 14 Chancery Lane 15 Cursitor Street
- 16 Took's Court 17 Chichester Rents
- 18 (Izaak Walton's House)
- 19 Record Office
- 20 Inner Temple Lane
- 21 Temple Church
- 22 Goldsmith's Grave
- 23 Temple Gardens
- 24 Pump Court Elm Court
Fig Tree Court Hare Court
- 25 Crown Office Row
- 26 Middle Temple Lane
- 27 Johnson's Buildings
- 28 Brick Court 29 Fountain Court
- 30 Middle Temple Hall
- 31 Devereux Court 32 Essex Street
- 33 Arundel Street 34 Norfolk Street
- 35 Howard Street 36 Surrey Street
- 37 Strand Lane 38 Somerset House
- 39 The Strand 40 St. Mary's Church
- 41 Aldwych 42 Gladstone Statue
- 43 St. Clement's Danes Church
- 44 Clement's Inn
- 45 Royal Courts of Justice
- 46 Temple Bar
- 47 Child's Bank (Devil Tavern)
- 48 (Dick's Coffee House, No. 8)
- 49 Rainbow Tavern
- 50 Prince Henry's House
- 51 Cock Tavern 52 Falcon Court
- 53 (Mitre Tavern)
- 54 St. Dunstan's Church
- 55 Clifford's Inn 56 Fetter Lane
- 57 Fleur-de-lys Court 58 Newton Hall
- 59 Moravian Chapel
- 60 Nevill's Court 61 (Barnard's Inn)
- 62 (Swan Distillery) 63 Holborn
- 64 (The Heavy Hill)
- 65 St. Andrew's Church
- 66 Snow Hill 67 Old Bell Inn
- 68 (Black Bull) 69 (Furnival's Inn)
- 70 Brook Street 71 Fox Court
- 72 Holborn Bars 73 Staple Inn
- 74 High Holborn
- 75 Southampton Buildings
- 76 Gray's Inn Road
- 77 Gray's Inn Gateway
- 78 South Square
- 79 Old Hall of Gray's Inn
- 80 Old Chapel of Gray's Inn
- 81 Gray's Inn Square
- 82 Verulam Buildings
- 83 Catalpa Tree
- 84 Raymond Buildings
- 85 Lord Beaconsfield's Birthplace
- 86 John Street to Longhyt Street
- 87 Bedford Row 88 Hand Court
- 89 (George and Blue Boar)
- 90 Featherstone Buildings
- 91 (Milton's House)
- 92 Red Lion Street
- 93 Red Lion Square
- 94 Southampton Row
- 95 Bloomsbury Square
- 96 Southampton Street
- 97 Kingsway
- 98 (Little Queen Street)
(Lamb's House)
- 99 Sardinia Street or Duke Street
- 100 Portsmouth Street
- 101 Portugal Street
- 102 (Duke's Theatre)
- 103 (Serle's Coffee House)
- 104 Lincoln's Inn Fields, West Side
- 105 John Forster's House
- 106 Ancaster or Lindsey House
- 107 James Spedding's House
- 108 Newcastle House
- 109 Ship Tavern 110 Soane House
- 111 Great Turnstile

LINCOLN'S INN DISTRICT.



Names in brackets mean that the Site only is indicated, the old building having disappeared.

